

Alternative Preparation for Licensure Policy Revised: August 23, 2002

The purpose of alternative preparation for licensure is to attract extremely capable individuals who bring maturity and a variety of work experiences to the teaching profession.

I. Admissions/Eligibility

- A. All candidates must have at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in the teaching field or related field. Candidates are eligible to participate in programs for alternative preparation for licensure in all endorsement areas except school support personnel and administration.
- B. Higher education faculty members and K-12 practitioners will jointly screen candidates for admission in accordance with approved procedures.
- C. The criteria for admission, including test requirements, will be the same as those required for admission to post-baccalaureate programs or an equivalent test requirement.
- D. Candidates may apply directly to institutions of higher education or may address inquiries to the State Department of Education which will refer candidates to institutions of higher education with approved alternative licensure programs.

II. Preparation

- A. Alternative preparation for licensure will consist of a Teacher Education Institute comprised of pre-service preparation incorporating the knowledge and skills specified for professional education as well as continuing professional growth and development during the first year of teaching. For candidates seeking endorsement in early childhood education (PreK-4), elementary education (K-8) and middle grades education (5-8), the pre-service and continuing preparation will include the knowledge and skills specified in the reading licensure standards.
- B. Higher education and K-12 personnel will collaboratively plan and deliver the program. The program will include outstanding faculty from one or more institutions of higher education and one or more school systems.

- C. The teacher will be issued an Alternative C License upon successful completion of the pre-service portion of an approved alternative preparation program and upon the recommendation of the institution of higher education.
- D. During the first year of teaching the teacher will receive the support of one or more mentor teachers, who will have received training. The teacher and the mentor will receive ongoing professional development through a program collaboratively planned by the school system(s) and institution(s) of higher education.
- E. The school system in which the teacher is employed must make a commitment to carry out the program and provide mentoring support for the teacher. The mentor(s) will meet regularly with teachers to demonstrate effective classroom instruction, observe the teacher, coach the teacher, provide continuity with pre-service training, and provide formative evaluation. Support from mentors and other professional development will be at least the equivalent of two days per month.
- F. The teacher's professional development will culminate in a seminar at the end of the first year in which the mentors participate. The program of study for certain endorsement areas, such as early childhood education (PreK-4), elementary education (K-8), middle grades education (5-8), and special education may continue during the summer following the first year of teaching.

III. Evaluation and Licensure

- A. The principal, or designee, will be responsible for evaluation of the teaching performance of the teacher.
- B. The teacher will attain full licensure as an apprentice teacher upon the following: recommendation by the school system in accordance with local evaluation procedures, recommendation to the State Department of Education by the institution(s) of higher education, and successful completion of all testing requirements. Successful completion of the teaching experience by the teacher will count as one apprentice year, or two apprentice years in the case of early childhood education (PreK-4), elementary education (K-8), middle grades education (5-8), or special education if the preparation program spans two years.
- C. The Alternative C License may be reissued one time if the teacher has not completed all of the requirements within one year, and two times in the case of early childhood education (PreK-4), elementary education (K-8), middle grades education (5-8), and special education teachers.

IV. Alternative Licensure Program

- A. The institution(s) of higher education and school system(s) will collaboratively develop a plan for an alternative licensure program which provides information regarding admissions procedures, format for the pre-service preparation program, continuing professional development and study for the first-year teacher, mentoring support and training of mentors, format for the concluding seminar, preparation program following the first year of teaching (if needed), and method of teacher assessment.
- B. The institution(s) of higher education and school system(s) will provide information in the plan regarding how the funding for the following expenses will be provided:
 - 1. Tuition or costs for the pre-service preparation program and for higher education involvement during the first year of teaching.
 - 2. Mentoring, including training of mentors, stipends for mentors,
 - 3. released time, and substitute teacher reimbursement.
 - 4. Salary of the teacher.

V. Program Approval

- A. The State Department of Education will review all proposed programs for alternative licensure and will recommend them to the State Board of Education for approval. Proposed programs will be submitted by an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions together with one or more school systems. The Department may conduct site visits of such programs either in conjunction with or in addition to regularly scheduled program approval visits.
- B. Approved programs must submit annual reports to the State Department of Education as part of their regular annual report.